

Buildings and Maintenance Fiscal Year 2002

The major goal of the Buildings and Maintenance Department is to maintain healthy, comfortable buildings and productive environments for all who work in and use our facilities. This requires continually doing preventive, corrective, and deferred maintenance on the following buildings: Town Hall, Amherst Police Facility, Bangs Community Center, Amherst Community Childcare Center, the Old North Amherst School, Munson Library, Ruxton Storage Facility and downtown.

These tasks are accomplished by a team of seven (7) full-time people (including myself), one (1) permanent part-time person (25 hours weekly), three (3) part-time people, and a contracted team (PACE) consisting of 2-3 mentally challenged people who devote their time to downtown cleanliness.

The obvious task of the maintenance team is to keep the buildings and grounds clean and ready for use at all times. This includes doing whatever else may be needed by staff, committees or other user groups. Cleaning and “set-ups” consume the major portion of the daily work schedule at the Town Hall, Police Facility, Bangs Community Center and Munson Library. In the remaining buildings, these tasks are accomplished by the primary users or renters.

The less obvious tasks, but in many cases the more important, are those concerned with maintenance of the various components of the building themselves. These encompass a broad range of daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly inspections and tasks, including responding to all emergencies, 24 hours per day. Following is a brief summary of the general categories involved: foundations and structural work; roofing; interior finishes, including ceilings, walls and floors; elevators; electrical systems, including lighting, motors, batteries, computer-operated energy management systems, distribution systems, special systems such as emergency lighting, fire alarm and security systems; landscaping; and last, but most important, the mechanical systems, which include heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC), plumbing, sprinkler, emergency generators, and automatic ADA doors.

Putting all of this together into a workable, efficient daily operation requires planning, maintenance strategies, budgeting, record keeping, public relations, and, in general, a good facilities manager.

Construction of the new Boltwood Walk Parking Garage is nearly complete. The surface level should be opening in July of 2002 and the underground section should follow soon afterwards. This facility should have a major impact on parking availability in downtown Amherst. Daily maintenance of this new facility will now become an ongoing challenge for the future.

Munson Library continues to be a focus for both maintenance and facility upgrades. Considerable staff time has been spent planning for major interior upgrades (painting, new floor coverings, and a much needed fire alarm system, along with exterior work which entails additional parking space, new sidewalks, and a small tool shed).

Bids for major exterior repairs and roofing work on the Old North Amherst School and the Bangs Community Center should be ready in the early spring of 2003, and work should be completed sometime next summer. Both of these jobs require the input of outside consultants.

The Town Hall, Police Facility, and Bangs Community Center are constantly receiving preventive maintenance. This includes minor repairs, painting, and floor-covering upgrades, as needed.

The Building Maintenance Department continues to monitor all the buildings and to make both short- and long-term recommendations to the various boards and committees regarding the ongoing financial issues associated with providing clean, sound, and safe buildings for all citizens and visitors to use and enjoy.

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Buildings and Maintenance Director